

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application. Claims 1, 4, 6-8, 10-13, 16-17, 19, and 21-29 are pending in the application.

Allowed Claims

Claims 3, 6, 12, 13, and 15 are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant thanks the Examiner for this indication of allowance. Claims 6, 12, and 13 are rewritten in independent form and hence, are in condition for allowance. The features of allowable claims 3 and 15 are now incorporated into their base claims 1 and 11, respectively, thereby placing claims 1 and 11 in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 2, 8, and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Patel, U.S. Patent No. 3,708,864 (hereinafter "Patel"). Claims 5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patel. Claims 1, 2, and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Phipps, Published Patent Application No. 2003/0230343 (hereinafter "Phipps") in view of Patel. Claims 11, 16, 17, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stout, Jr., U.S. Patent No. 6,548,760 (hereinafter "Stout") in view of Patel.

Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the limitations of allowable claim 3, and intervening claim 2, and hence is in condition for allowance. **Claims 2 and 3** are canceled as a result. **Dependent claims 4, 7, 8, and 10** are in condition for allowance by virtue of their dependency on claim 1.

Claim 11 is amended to incorporate the limitations of allowable claim 15. Claim 15 is canceled as a result. Thus, claim 11, and dependent claims 16, 17, and 19, are in condition for allowance.

New claims 21-29 are also in condition for allowance by virtue of their dependency on allowable independent claims 6, 12, and 13.

Applicant submits that the claims as filed were patentable over the prior art of record, and that the amendments herein are for purposes of clarifying the claims and/or for expediting allowance of the claims, and not for reasons related to patentability.

Conclusion

Claims 1, 4, 6-8, 10-13, 16-17, 19, and 21-29 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests prompt allowance of the subject application. If any issue remains unresolved that would prevent allowance of this case, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney to resolve the issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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